

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 TRSE-00 CU-02 BIB-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 ACDA-07 /062 W
-----081458Z 115271 /40

O R 081408Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3767
USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY ROME

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DEPARTMENT PASS AMBASSADOR SHERER. BRUSSELS FOR US
EEC.
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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, CSCE, FR, US, UR
SUBJ: CSCE: FRENCH "DISTANCING ACT" BEGINS

REF: USNATO 4251.

1. IN FRIENDLY, BUT WELL-REHEARSED AND CLEAR MANNER
QUAI'S CSCE COORDINATOR FRANCIS BEAUCHATAUD TOLD
EMBOFF JUNE 7 THAT FRENCH DELEGATION AT BELGRADE WILL
BE ANXIOUS TO AVOID CONTRIBUTING TO THE APPEARANCE OF
A BLOC-TO-BLOC APPROACH.

2. FRENCH HAVE AND WILL CONTINUE TO PARTICIPATE IN
BILATERAL AND GROUP CONSULTATIONS OF THE FIFTEEN AT
BELGRADE ON A "PRAGMATIC BASIS." HOWEVER, HE ARGUED,
THE PURPOSE OF CSCE IS TO RELAX TENSIONS, AND
PARENTHETICALLY TO REDUCE THE ROLE OF MILITARY
ALLIANCES. "REGULARLY SCHEDULED" OR "AUTOMATICALLY
PROGRAMMED" NATO CAUCUS MEETINGS WOULD ONLY LEND
SUBSTANCE TO THE WP ARGUMENT THAT THEY ARE CONFRONTING
A NATO BLOC AND ALSO STIMULATE THE NEUTRALS TO ACT AS
A BLOC THEMSELVES. (EMBOFF ASKED WHICH WP COUNTRY,
FOR INSTANCE, MIGHT ABSENT ITSELF FROM WP CAUCUSES IN
RESPONSE.) FRANCE WILL THEREFORE NOT WISH TO PARTICI-
PATE IN SUCH MEETINGS AUTOMATICALLY. AS AN ILLUSTRATION
OF NEW FRENCH APPROACH, BEAUCHATAUD INFORMED US
THAT FRENCH DELEGATION, WHICH HE WILL HEAD, WOULD NOT
REPEAT NOT PARTICIPATE IN MEETING OF FIFTEEN NOW
SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 14 AT BELGRADE (REFTEL).

3. IN MAKING THIS SPEECH--EVIDENTLY ON INSTRUCTIONS--
BEAUCHATAUD ALSO WAS ANXIOUS TO MAKE CLEAR THAT THIS
DID NOT MEAN THAT FRENCH WOULD DEPART FROM AGREED
ALLIED APPROACHES WHICH THEY HAD CAREFULLY HELPED
DEVELOP IN THE COURSE OF THE LAST YEAR. NOR DID IT
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MEAN THAT THEY DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF
CONSULTATIONS AT BELGRADE "WHEN THE SITUATION REALLY
CALLED FOR IT." THEY WOULD ALWAYS BE READY TO TALK
WITH US AND OTHERS BILATERALLY AND WOULD "FROM TIME TO
TIME" BE PREPARED TO MEET WITH THE FIFTEEN AS A GROUP
ON A "PRAGMATIC BASIS." WHEN EMBOFF INDICATED THAT

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SS-15 BIB-01 CU-02 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 NSCE-00 SSO-00
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-----081459Z 115354 /40

O R 081408Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3768
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INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
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THIS WAS OBVIOUS DEPARTURE FROM SYSTEM ESTABLISHED
AT GENEVA, WHERE THE FIFTEEN MET REGULARLY, ALMOST
AUTOMATICALLY ON ALL ISSUES, BEAUCHATAUD SAID THAT MAY
BE SO. INDEED HE EXPECTED NUMBER OF FRANCE'S OTHER
ALLIES ALSO WOULD BE LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THIS
NEW APPROACH. HOWEVER, THAT'S WHAT THE FRENCH WOULD
DO.

4. ASKED IF THIS "DISTANCING" WAS PART OF PREPARATIONS
FOR BREZHNEV VISIT TO FRANCE, AND PERHAPS REFLECTED

PASSAGES ON CSCE IN THE BREZHNEV-GISCARD TEXT CURRENTLY BEING NEGOTIATED IN MOSCOW, BEAUCHATAUD ONLY REFERRED US WITH SLIGHT SMILE TO DE GUIRINGAUD'S MOSCOW TOAST AS REPORTED AFP, ESPECIALLY PASSAGE SAYING THAT "DETENTE SHOULD BE THE BUSINESS OF SOVEREIGN STATES, DETERMINED FREELY AND NOT IN THE SHADOW OF THE MOST POWERFUL."

5. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT, AS WAS TO BE EXPECTED, FRENCH ARE BENDING OVER BACKWARDS IN WEEKS BEFORE BREZHNEV VISIT TO OFFER SOVIETS AS SMALL A TARGET FOR CRITICISM AND AS COOPERATIVE A POSTURE AS ITS COMMITMENTS PERMIT IN CSCE FIELD. WHILE THIS FRENCH EMPHASIS ON AN EVEN MORE "INDEPENDENT" IMAGE THAN AT GENEVA MAY PERSIST THROUGHOUT BELGRADE CONFERENCE, WE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF IT CAME TO BE LESS RIGOROUSLY APPLIED ONCE THE BREZHNEV VISIT PASSED.

6. AFTER INITIAL REMONSTRANCES WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT WE AVOID SERIOUS ARGUMENT WITH FRENCH ON THIS SCORE, SINCE THIS WOULD IN ANY CASE PROBABLY NOT CHANGE THEIR MIND. WE WOULD INSTEAD SUGGEST TAKING QUAI AT FACE VALUE AND (A) ARRANGING FOR SUCH INFORMAL COORDINATION BILATERALLY AND THROUGH THE NINE AS MAY BE NEEDED, AND (B) LENDING TO REALLY IMPORTANT NATO CAUCUSES AN AIR OF SPONTANEITY, TO MEET FRENCH INTEREST IN "PRAGMATIC" CONFIDENTIAL

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RATHER THAN NOT SYSTEMATICALLY ORGANIZED NATO COORDINATION.
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